United Nations A/56/221

General Assembly

Distr.: General
25 July 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Item 109 of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development and International economic cooperation

Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in response to General Assembly resolution 51/172. The report includes the recommendations of the seventh Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication and Development, organized by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, in 1998, and reviews the communication and development activities of UNESCO, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Bank.

* A/56/150.
** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

01-47036 (E) 140901

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/172, including the recommendations of the Seventh Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

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I. Seventh Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

1. In response to General Assembly resolution 51/172, UNICEF, within its mandate and programme, organized the seventh Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development, from 10 to 13 November 1998, in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil.

2. The Round Table followed the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations in "Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system" (A/50/126-E/1995/20, annex).

3. In accordance with previous Round Tables, the objectives were: to share information, experiences and training; to develop common strategies and approaches; and to identify mechanisms of cooperation between the participants.

4. The 1998 Round Table was attended by representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WPF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Various governmental and non-governmental agencies also participated: USAID and BASICS (United States of America), AMARC (Colombia), the Thamthai Fund (Thailand), the Odelbracht Foundation, the Press Agency for Child's Rights, Projeto Nordeste (Brazil) and CITY (South Africa). Present as well were researchers from the following learning training centres: Catholic University of Brussels, University of Copenhagen and Academy for Education in Development (Washington, D.C.).

5. It was stressed that, although the Round Tables periodically present an inventory of communication for development, the activity is still not sufficiently institutionalized. It is important, therefore, to establish a clear distinction between the different forms of communication. Terminology and definitions were proposed to distinguish each communication activity. This is undoubtedly a first step in the setting-up of an evaluation of the communication programmes, which should be the object of reinforced and even institutionalized cooperation between the cooperating United Nations agencies. Another priority is the need to advance from the rather restricted framework in which communication for development programmes are placed. The concept needs to be redefined in order to facilitate a larger acknowledgement of its active part in social development processes.

6. Four major issues were discussed during the Round Table. Working groups made operational recommendations. The subjects were: developing the concept of communication for development; evaluating specialized programmes; strengthening knowledge; and communication and change of human behaviour through community media.

7. The Round Table adopted the idea of task forces, which would present communication as a fundamental element of development programmes. The objectives would be to identify particular weaknesses of the programmes and, starting from theory, provide the necessary data and propose models. It is also necessary to reinforce cooperation between United Nations agencies, donors, non-governmental organizations and learning centres. Both at the national and international levels, the task forces would be set up to promote the role of communication within the framework of development programmes.

8. The Round Table acknowledged the importance of research for communication in development. It recommended that an institutional platform should be developed, specializing in the evaluation of projects at each stage. A guide should describe the evolution of the programmes, and, in close cooperation with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations, indicate future tendencies. The guide would facilitate the conception of programmes and the orientation of policies for the coming years.

9. It was also proposed that priority should be given to the creation of a web site which could collect the results of the applied research and the methodology of the communication for development. UNESCO was requested to prepare documentation in the fields of development and participatory communication. In particular, the guide *Approaches for the Development of Communication* should be updated and completed. The Round Table suggested that a comparative study should be done of the methodologies adopted by United Nations agencies and of their different operational approaches and perspectives, the programmes' impact and the duration. Evaluations

should be encouraged through peer reviews. The Round Table recognized the strategic role of community media and wished to improve knowledge by proposing an inventory of best practices and empirical models to facilitate training in community-oriented communication.

10. The Round Table strongly recommended supporting progress in the conception and realization of communication programmes concerning the HIV/AIDS pandemic, after having carefully evaluated the current results and the methods applied and the development of operational parameters for the project "Change", developed by UNAIDS.

11. UNFPA agreed to organize the eighth Round Table on Communication for Development, scheduled to take place from 26 to 29 November 2001 in Managua, Nicaragua, and proposed the following three central issues: evaluating the information programmes designed to halt the HIV/AIDS pandemic; development of methodologies to evaluate current communication programmes; and using community radio to reach the disadvantaged.

II. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

12. UNESCO's action in the field of communication for development aims at providing support for Member States, particularly the developing countries, to strengthen their communication capacities as integral parts of development strategies.

13. UNESCO aims at increasing the contribution of media and information to the process of social integration and development in general, with an emphasis on poverty and illiteracy eradication, good governance, gender issues, empowering women and young people, research and media education through advisory services to Member States, conferences, meetings, seminars, publications/documentation and training.

14. To enhance its communication for development activities, UNESCO gives high priority to strengthening communication capacities in developing countries, in particular through the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), funds-in-trust projects and inter-agency cooperation. IPDC has had a remarkable impact on a broad range of communication for development activities, among which are the promotion of press freedom and media independence and pluralism, community media development, human resource development for the media, computerization of both national and regional news agencies, and training for radio and television broadcasters.

15. For the coming years, the main orientations of IPDC activities have been defined as follows: improvement of media pluralism and promotion of press freedom; training activities; creation and strengthening of community media; and new information and communication technologies, which will be essential in strengthening development communication activities.

16. Special attention is paid to the promotion and integration of new and traditional information and communication technologies for communication development, based on past experience and numerous comprehensive studies. UNESCO in fact launched the notion of community multimedia centres (CMCs), which combine traditional community broadcasting with new information and communication technologies (NICTs). CMCs address the digital divide in the least developed countries, seeking to ensure that information, communication and knowledge become the basic tools of the poor in improving their own lives through an approach that is cost-effective, country-differentiated and empowerment-oriented. The following actions are being implemented: developing CMCs in poor communities; obtaining from regulatory and political levels better frameworks and technical infrastructures to guarantee access to new technologies; ensuring a necessary linkage between grass-roots development operations and regional/national authorities, providing adapted institutional information, freeing the airwaves and allowing favourable broadcasting licensing.

17. The experience gained from numerous UNESCO projects and studies on community media projects demonstrates that it is through this holistic programme that development communication activities have their greatest impact and that community media are the most cost-efficient means of assisting countries in their grass-roots development efforts.

18. The community media projects, whose activities include equipment procurement; installation and

training of programme production staff as well as the evaluation of the impact of the community radios, are seen as some of the most important community-based projects being implemented by UNESCO.

19. Several handbooks and guides on "model" community radio projects highlighting UNESCO's experience in supporting grass-roots community media have been published to assist media professionals in developing countries involved in similar initiatives all over the world.

20. UNESCO also re-invigorated its practical and advisory services to news agencies in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia, emphasizing their important functions of collecting and disseminating news as part of development communication activities and of preventing the marginalization of rural and poor segments of society.

21. Knowing the importance of news agencies in the dissemination of communication development information and aware that national news agencies worldwide are experiencing difficulties, UNESCO commissioned a study to analyse in depth the situation and suggest solutions. A workshop, held in Amman in January 2000, brought together 13 news agencies from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern and Central Europe and the Middle East. A major recommendation of the workshop was that countries should support news collection, processing and dissemination activities without necessarily favouring either public or commercial agencies. Countries should have possibilities of disseminating development communication information to rural and marginalized communities. To guarantee the survival of news agencies, it was proposed that news collection and dissemination institutions should aspire to diversification of services and products; research; training and professional development; and networking to share experiences and resources.

22. Critical to development communication activities is the training of personnel. UNESCO continued to support the training of communication personnel in all regions of the world. Since January 2000 over 1,500 communication professionals from more than 60 countries have received training and upgraded their skills in journalism, new media technologies, HIV/AIDS reporting, broadcasting management, newspaper management, photography, computer operations, the Internet etc.

23. Continuing its support of activities designed to develop and strengthen public service broadcasting and promote its educational and cultural missions, UNESCO continued to support public service broadcasting institutions, knowing that those institutions may have a large impact on the dissemination of communication development activities. Thus, activities in support of public service broadcasting involved equipment procurement, assistance with technical assistance on enabling media legislation, and programme production.

24. The UNESCO Programme for Creative Television (CreaTV) aims at encouraging creative endogenous television productions in developing countries, seen as a critical contribution to the dissemination of communication development messages. Five CreaTV Workshops were organized in the year 2000 in Africa, Asia, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, thus providing high-level professional training, distribution and production opportunities for more than 200 audio-visual professionals from 43 countries. The Programme, implemented in partnership with International Public Television and in cooperation with local professional organizations, has proved to be an effective way of encouraging local audio-visual productions and their international circulation.

25. UNESCO continued to study the marginalization of women in national media landscapes and its impact on their access to development communication activities. It can be hypothesized that women's inability to have equal access to the media also denies them the opportunity to have access to development communication activities.

26. The organization continued to implement the project "Women speaking to women", which establishes community radio stations run by and for women. The "Women on the Net" project is designed to foster social participation of women via the Internet.

27. A practical handbook, *Women in the Digital Age*, seeks to introduce key themes for women in the digital age through examples of how women are using the Internet. UNESCO launched, jointly with the Pan-African News Agency, a bulletin entitled "Women of Africa" for dissemination in Africa. One of the major aims of the bulletin is to improve the professional

standards of women journalists so as to increase their participation in national media landscapes.

28. Particularly relevant to the recommendations of the seventh Round Table and the Secretary-General's recent Call for Action on HIV/AIDS has been the systematic integration of HIV/AIDS components to UNESCO communication projects. In 2000, an innovative health-care information methodology was developed through investigative journalism in East Africa. Tailored publications and national campaigns were developed through close cooperation between UNESCO and UNAIDS. Three main strategic lines of action are: preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS; reducing the impact of the epidemic; and improving managerial capacities and procedures for effective project implementation.

29. UNESCO paid increased attention to studies and research in the field of media education through support to professional organizations such as the International Association for Media and Communication Research and active participation at major events, particularly at the Forum of Media Researchers in Sydney, Australia, and the Thessaloniki Summit on Children and the Media. It is crucial to strengthen cooperation with media research institutions and national regulatory authorities and educational institutions, especially on issues of media violence, media education and the Internet. The exponential growth of the Internet in households and schools prompted a renewed interest in the concept of youth media education in formal and informal school curricula. UNESCO has therefore started a research programme on media literacy, aiming to promote critical approaches on the part of youngsters to the media. After consultations with researchers and the completion of a worldwide survey to identify local needs in a diversity of approaches to this issue, three main sets of actions were defined: better cooperation between researchers and practitioners/teachers and radio/TV producers, particularly in Asia and Africa; development of educational methods, publications and learning tools; advice on national legislature and regulations.

III. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

30. UNICEF's organizational transition to a programming cooperation approach based explicitly on the human rights of children and women has important implications for communication programming. In specific, two areas need to be underlined: a stronger focus on the participatory dimension of communication — meaning a wider, more conscious, more systematic focus on the active involvement of all stakeholders at all stages of communication programming, from assessment to analysis, to planning and implementation; and an effort to focus on reaching the most disadvantaged children, women, and communities, from a communication perspective.

31. That focus is found in both country-level programming and UNICEF guidance. At the country level, participatory communication is increasingly utilized in synergy with, and as a basis for, more traditional communication approaches (such as media communication or social marketing). Participatory research and other forms of consultation with the involvement of communities are increasingly utilized as the basis for the development of strategic communication interventions. At the headquarters level, the new programming guidance currently being developed includes training modules on strategic communication planning and community participation. In addition, three studies are in progress: a study on the mainstreaming of community participation and participatory communication within UNICEF programming process; a study on UNICEF experiences in reaching the unreached and most disadvantaged groups; and a study on the state of the art in community participation and participatory communication outside the UNICEF sphere of work.

32. These studies will contribute to the UNICEF programme guidance on human rights-based programming. The work in progress shows a remarkable change in programming approaches in the course of the past few years, with added emphasis on active involvement of those communities that were once defined as "beneficiaries" but are now recognized as full partners in development programmes, together with Governments and civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. Clearly, this is work in progress: the mainstreaming of participatory communication and the development of communication

modalities to reach the most disadvantaged groups are not yet in place, but attempts are under way and models are being developed. The ongoing experiences now being documented will provide substantive lessons, which will be shared and adapted to different contexts.

33. Another area where there is a clear trend towards increased utilization of participatory communication approaches is the area of programming for adolescents. The review of country programmes carried out in the course of the past few years shows a change from the simple involvement of adolescents in the implementation phase of projects to their increasing involvement during other phases — assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and/or evaluation. In addition, a major communication project being developed, called "What every adolescent has a right to know", has a clearly defined adolescents' participation component at all stages, as well as an adolescents capacity-building component.

A. A future global agenda for children

34. A global agenda for the new millennium is being developed as a major advocacy and programming initiative by a wide set of development partners, many of which are from developing countries. The global agenda will be discussed and finalized during the special session of the General Assembly in September 2001 and will inform global action for children. Of course, it will have wide implications for country-level communication programming. The new framework being developed, with its focus on stages of development ("life-cycles") rather than on vertical programmes, will require a further strengthening of integrated communication interventions which respond to the emerging holistic view of children's survival, development and participation in each of the three life-cycles identified: early childhood, basic education period, adolescence.

B. UNICEF communication policy

35. A UNICEF communication policy was approved by the Executive Board during the annual session 1998 (1-5 June 1998). It defines the communication functions of UNICEF at global, regional and country levels, the identification of priority areas and a strategy for implementation. The report (E/ICEF/1998/10) is divided into six chapters. Chapter I provides a conceptual framework for the UNICEF communication policy; chapter II discusses communication channels and processes; chapter III looks at audience research, monitoring and evaluation; chapter IV describes functional accountability at country, regional and headquarters levels; and chapter V addresses human resources implications.

36. The Executive Director's recommendation to the Executive Board is contained in chapter VI. It recommends that the Board endorse the report on UNICEF communication strategy as a broad policy framework for UNICEF communication activities; supports the approach outlined in the report, which defines UNICEF communication functions as including information, advocacy, behaviour development and change, and social and resource mobilization; and encourages the intensification of UNICEF efforts to strengthen collaboration and partnerships with relevant sectors of the communication field.

37. In addition to stressing the communication role in global advocacy, global mobilization and fund-raising, the policy sets forth the framework for, and draws attention to, the role of communication for development within the context of the country programming process. Communication for development is recognized as an essential element for raising awareness on, and use of services for, promoting informed choices of behaviour and ensuring that households, local communities and especially women and adolescents are involved through participatory approaches in determining problems, identifying solutions, communicating messages, and taking action. Communication for development is also recognized as a pivotal tool for creating an enabling environment for influencing legislation and opinions and mobilizes resources for children. The same applies in emergencies and unstable contexts, where communication efforts need to be implemented with additional urgency, commensurate with the critical time factor of crises.

C. New generic job descriptions for communication staff in the field

38. As detailed in the UNICEF communication policy, "communication" includes a number of different functions. They can be grouped into two main categories: programme communication, and media/external relations communication. Although related,

the functions under each category require distinct competencies that are often difficult to find in one person: the skills needed in programme communication — to communicate effectively with community groups, help people articulate their needs, solve problems, master new skills etc. — are distinct from those needed in media/external relations communication, where the emphasis is on the development and implementation of media strategies, on telling the UNICEF story in compelling ways and producing quality materials for print, Internet and broadcast media. While the primary focus of programme communication is the achievement of specific country programme objectives, external communication is a corporate function that must respond to country, regional and global communication needs.

39. The recognition of the different functions of programme communication officers and (media/external relations) communication officers has recently resulted in the development of new generic job descriptions. The new descriptions, finalized and released in 2000, cover the entire range of the programme communication and communication posts in UNICEF field offices, from regional advisers to country office assistants. Both programme communication and (media/external relations) communication are recognized as "core functions" within UNICEF, essential if UNICEF is to fulfil its mission and mandate.

40. In small offices, both functions will likely continue to be performed by the same person, but there will be more clarity on the necessary communication skills to be found among the staff and consultants recruited to cover either or both of the functions.

D. Communication for development: programming guidelines

41. To guide UNICEF country teams and their partners in the planning and implementation of communication for development interventions, the Programme Division of UNICEF developed communication for development guidelines. Available since 1998 in draft format, the guidelines are being increasingly utilized by country offices in the development of the communication component of the country programmes of cooperation. A final revision, based on the country offices experience so far and their feedback, is foreseen for 2001, when the guidelines will be formally released.

E. Training and capacity-building

42. A training package "Communication for behaviour change and development", developed in 1998 and tested in several countries, has been finalized and will be released in 2001. In the meantime, various adaptations and applications have been developed, tested and widely utilized. One of the most widely utilized versions is the one developed for a five-day training and planning workshop, which simultaneously allows participants to learn the basic principles and processes of strategic communication for development planning, while planning the communication component of a specific programme or project, or of the country programme in its totality. The workshop has been extensively utilized, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), with country teams involved in polio eradication, but has also been utilized for new interventions, such as prevention of parent-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. The value of the methodology, which combines training with actual planning, is in the shift it proposes from a standard training exercise to the application of the process to the real issues at stake, therefore engaging the participants more deeply and allowing them to see from the beginning of the process — through a step-by-step application of the methodology — its result in terms of communication for development programming. In addition, the methodology moves away from an "expert" approach, in which the communication expert produces the communication component of the programme, towards participatory communication planning, where all of the country's team members (from government, UNICEF, other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations) are involved in the planning, with beneficial results in terms of sharing and learning skills as well as ownership of the final product, which has in itself important implications for the implementation of the strategic communication plan developed.

43. A communication for development training and planning tool suitable for emergency situations was developed and tested in the course of the Kosovo emergency in 1999, both in Macedonia and Kosovo. It is being reviewed and will be finalized in 2002.

F. Country-level communication for development experiences: trends and challenges

44. The review of communication for development activities implemented at the country level, conducted on an annual basis by the UNICEF Programme Division, helps to define emerging trends and challenges as well as identify innovative experiences in country-level communication for development programming.

Trends

45. First, communication is increasingly seen as a necessary and integral component of country-level programming, rather than an ad hoc intervention. Secondly, while in the past the focus of country-level communication interventions was on the advocacy and social mobilization strategic components, in recent years there has been increasing understanding of the fact that "programme communication" — the communication strategy specifically aimed at reaching families, communities and individuals, to facilitate informed behavioural change — is a necessary strategic component and needs to be utilized in synergy with the other two, if sustained societal change is to be achieved. Also, increasing attention is being paid to the systematic use of research data and formative research within the planning of strategic communication interventions. This is particularly clear in some priority areas of UNICEF interventions, such as HIV/AIDS, PPTCT, ECC, PEI, IMCI. Overall, there is a clear move from the old Information, Education and Communication approach — mainly based on materials production, health education and use of mass media to share information and raise awareness — to a carefully planned, research-based, participatory and strategic communication planning methodology based on the principles of the "Triple A" (Assessment, Analysis and Action).

Challenges

46. Challenges remain in "reaching the unreached" and emergency situations, which are two areas that deserve increased attention in terms of communication programming. The use of strategic communication planning for polio eradication in emergency contexts has however allowed countries to adapt existing methodologies, creating a richness of experience that needs to be recorded and shared, and whose lessons need to be integrated within existing communication guidance. In order to reach the unreached, micro-planning and increased involvement of communities seem to be the two most important traits emerging from experiences now being documented.

Advocacy

47. At the country level, advocacy continues to be an important strategic tool to influence decision-making processes. It has played a necessary role in the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and advancing the related process of legislative review, affecting financial and planning decision-making. Children's parliaments, opinion polls, State-level workshops on children's rights, film festivals, visits by celebrities (UNICEF ambassadors etc.) and other such initiatives have been instrumental in raising general public awareness and informing country decision-making processes. In 2000, a comprehensive legal revision process aiming at implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was conducted in Kosovo. In Guatemala, as a result of advocacy efforts, a Youth Rights Act was enacted last year. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, a national conference was organized in 2000 to address the issue of child-trafficking. A major advocacy effort, implemented with social mobilization and programme communication initiatives, is ongoing in several countries to promote girls' education.

Social mobilization

48. Social mobilization continues to be extensively utilized at the country level to mobilize civil society organizations in support of development goals and to create an enabling environment for change. Non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, and the private sector have been increasingly mobilized for a variety of programmes, from landmine awareness in Nicaragua, to national immunization days in all polio endemic countries, to sanitation weeks in Indonesia and Myanmar, to national safe motherhood week in Peru. Other civil society organizations, such as universities and medical associations, are increasingly involved in partnering with UNICEF on a variety of development goals. Rotary and Scout Clubs are

involved in polio eradication efforts in several countries.

Programme communication

49. Programme communication is benefiting from increased understanding, among development professionals, of the need to involve communities in development programmes as subjects and partners, rather than as "beneficiaries". The use of strategic communication planning processes has increased substantially in the course of the past few years, allowing country teams to view audience and channel selection as fundamentally linked to a process of participatory assessment and analysis of the country specificity in terms of meeting the rights of children and women. Although modern media, such as radio and television, continue to play a major role in most countries as communication channels of choice, increasingly interpersonal communication is recognized as a necessary and complementary channel to informed and sustained behavioural development. For example, through their involvement in assessing and analysing their situation and some of the health challenges in their life, women from the Nissa Bank project in Mauritania have become active communicators in their own right: by sharing messages, in their own words, on the use of mosquito nets and the consumption of iodized salt within their own communities, and through the example of their own practices, these women have become catalysts of behavioural change.

Social marketing

50. Social marketing has been strategically utilized in programmes such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. A social marketing approach is being utilized in Rwanda to distribute mosquito nets and promote healthy behaviour, and in Swaziland to combat HIV/AIDS.

IV. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

51. Building awareness of population issues in both developed and developing countries was one of the tasks assigned to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Economic and Social Council of the United Nations resolution 1763 (LIV) in 1973. UNFPA's mandate reaffirmed its leadership role in promoting population programmes and in raising awareness that population and development have an integral and mutually reinforcing relationship. At the same time, population information, education and communication (IEC) became one of the areas the Fund supported in its programme countries to bring attention to the needs of couples, families and individuals in the areas of reproductive health and population and to prompt action to improve their well-being through broadened choices. Now every national population programme has a communication component for either advocacy, resource mobilization, partnership-building, capacity-building or behavioural change.

52. In decision 95/15, the Executive Board adopted programme priorities and future directions of UNFPA in light of the International Conference on Population and Development. The decision endorsed three core programme areas for the Fund: reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health; population and development strategies; and advocacy. Advocacy communication is also one of the four principal results-based strategies.

53. The general aim of advocacy communication, as identified by UNFPA, is to promote or reinforce a change at a societal level in, for example, policies, programmes or legislation. In its role as one of the leading advocates for the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development and of the review held five years later, the Fund speaks out globally and through its country programme communication interventions to change attitudes and to influence policies on such issues as:

(a) The right of every couple to decide freely and responsibly the size and spacing of their families and to have access to the information, services and commodities that will allow them to do so;

(b) The need for societies to adopt and implement sustainable population policies;

(c) The need to ensure safe motherhood;

(d) The need to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV;

(e) The need to empower women and to combat gender-based violence;

(f) The need to engage men as partners in promoting reproductive and sexual health and gender equity;

(g) The need to inform and empower young people to protect their reproductive health.

54. At the global level, advocacy helps ensure that the international community and international media are aware of the importance of the Conference goals in achieving sustainable development and of UNFPA's role and programmes in achieving those goals. Another major aim of global advocacy is to help mobilize resources for population and reproductive health programmes. International events such as World Population Day, the annual launches of *State of World Population* and the growing use of Goodwill Ambassadors in countries throughout the world have been highly successful in creating support for and broad-based awareness of UNFPA's global agenda and in promoting the Fund's mandate and image. These international events also serve as the basis for many national-level activities as well. The UNFPA web site has become an important venue for equipping advocates for the goals of the ICPD with first-hand information. More information on UNFPA's global advocacy efforts is presented in the document "UNFPA information and communication strategy" (DP/FPA/2001/6).

55. At the country level, advocacy is seen as playing three interrelated roles: (a) to foster a favourable public policy climate for the implementation of population and reproductive health programmes; (b) to mobilize support from national partners, including the media and community leaders, to create national consensus; and (c) to foster the participation of the public and communities in the implementation of policies and programmes. To the extent that a change in the reproductive health and gender practices of individuals depends very much on changes in institutions, policies or community values, advocacy has been used to bolster political will and overcome sociocultural obstacles to change and to introduce institutional changes that are conducive to the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action. Advocacy is, therefore, used to influence the commitment and behaviours of key policy makers, opinion leaders, religious leaders, gatekeepers, influential groups and civil society, to rally their support for change and to help them take ownership of the Conference goals nationally and to lead social mobilization in support of the Programme of Action.

56. As evidenced by the annual reports from country offices, the quality of advocacy programming has also improved significantly at the country level in recent years, largely due to the technical assistance provided through UNFPA's Technical Advisory Programme country support teams. Regional communication advisers from the CSTs have assisted many countries in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating advocacy programme interventions. In collaboration with UNFPA headquarters and partner institutions, country support teams have conducted capacity-building workshops and developed resource tools to enhance the institutional capability of countries to execute the advocacy component of their programmes. Special emphasis is being placed on a results-based programme management approach.

57. In this regard, advocacy communication as a core programme area is contrasted with behaviour change communication (often called information, education and communication, or IEC), which is designed to change attitudes and behaviours among individuals, health providers and educators in the areas of reproductive and sexual health and gender equity. Behaviour change communication remains a core component of national population and reproductive health programmes. For instance, a study based on data obtained from a UNFPA-sponsored radio drama programme used in the United Republic of Tanzania in the early 1990s to increase usage of contraceptives concluded that a multimedia campaign, integrated with a reproductive health service delivery programme, did more than influence knowledge and attitudes: it actually changed behaviour and led directly to an increased use of reproductive health facilities, acceptance of contraceptives by women, and greater discussion of family planning between husbands and wives. The findings confirmed that multiple media sources of information could reinforce and actually extend the reach of family planning services, ultimately "creating an environment where the practice of contraception is perceived as a social norm".[1] Increasingly, country programmes develop comprehensive communication strategies to create a culture of prevention against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and the creation of partnership with men on these issues.

V. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

58. Although it has yet to participate in the Round Tables, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) intends to play an increasingly meaningful role in collaborating with other United Nations agencies in the area of communication for development. UNEP's Division of Early Warning and Assessment aims at bringing necessary information into the decision-making process for formulating effective global, regional and national policies on environment. The initiative is designed not only to link analysis and decision but also to obtain the best available description of the potential implications of policy choices. The Division performs those key functions with a view to triggering new policies, environmental management practices and assessments based on credible, scientifically sound methodologies. It also develops new indicators and indexes to alert the global community on trends in critical and emerging environmental issues.

59. UNEP has made efforts to cooperate with collaborating centres, advisory groups, scientists and policy makers and linkages with other United Nations bodies through the global environment outlook (GEO) process and report series. The GEO report series reflects the best information and perspectives available today on the global environment. UNEP's second global environment outlook report, GEO-2, was launched in 1999 and has been published in Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

60. UNEP has developed a web-based interactive catalogue, UNEP.net, for the purpose of ensuring better public access to environmental information and supporting strategic environmental assessment for well-informed decision-making. UNEP.net offers access to environmentally relevant geographical, textual and pictorial information. It also provides a platform for UNEP partners and collaborating institutions and centres to share among themselves and with the public the environmental information they possess. The design of UNEP.net will support global reporting processes and ensure that these processes are mutually supportive.

61. Established in June 2000, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) has functioned as the key biodiversity assessment centre of UNEP. Its main objective is to provide biodiversity-related assessment, information and training services to assist Governments and other organizations to implement policies and action plans to reverse the loss of species and ecosystem and promote sustainable environmental, economic and social development programmes.

62. UNEP also focuses on advisory and clearing-house services to Governments, civil society, academic institutions, schools and individuals. It provides advisory services on utilizing the African Learning Channel of the United States-based WorldSpace Foundation for environmental education and training, particularly in remote areas of the African region.

VI. World Health Organization (WHO)

63. WHO's responsibility to act as the directing and coordinating authority on international health inevitably involves it in a wide range of multilingual communication activities. It is true that communication and information dissemination play a key role in promoting health as an integral component of development, and WHO remains committed to making greater use of modern communication methods in its information dissemination on health. The organization's continuing efforts in this context have been paralleled by the development of web sites for WHO's headquarters as well as six regional offices (www.who.int). Through these portals, users can access directly a wealth of technical documentation or can order publications, videos and documents. At the same time, radio and video programmes and online training materials, webcasts and electronic discussion groups have been developed to complement the printed press releases whereby the media in different regions of the globe can access and relay health information to the public.

64. In the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/130, WHO organizes round-table sessions linked to the theme of the annual *World Health Report*, as part of the annual World Health Assembly. The organization managers and technical experts from country, regional and headquarters offices regularly take part in panels and other informal gatherings.

65. WHO is active in capacity-building, bridging the gaps between researchers across the global digital

divide, in the framework of the Health InterNetwork project.

66. The Global School Health Initiative, launched in 1995, seeks to mobilize and strengthen health promotion and educational activities at the local, national, regional and global levels. The Initiative is designed to improve the health of students, school personnel, families and other members of the community through schools. Also, the WHO Healthy Cities Programme aims to put health on the agenda of decision makers, build a strong lobby for public health, and develop holistic, popular, participatory approaches to dealing with health issues, bringing together all the development sectors in a strategic alliance in actions that can lead to a health transformation in creating healthy conditions in various physical environments. Communication strategies are at the heart of both the Global School Health Initiative and the Healthy Cities Programme, which are to develop political and popular health awareness and support for health.

VII. Joint United Nations Programmes on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

67. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS advocates HIV/AIDS behavioural change communications programming to promote a social and political environment more conducive to HIV/AIDS prevention, care and impact reduction. To facilitate the use of effective integrated communication strategies as a core element of nationwide communications programming on HIV/AIDS, the UNAIDS secretariat, in cooperation with Pennsylvania State University (United States), developed and published in 1999 an innovative approach to communication development: *Communications Framework for HIV/AIDS*. It is aimed at helping countries move from interventions that focus on individual behavioural change to a more comprehensive strategy that takes into account relevant social and economic factors. Within UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA, the framework has already been adopted by the relevant sectors.

68. The Organization's network to support national HIV/AIDS communications programming was dramatically expanded during 1999-2000. The UNAIDS co-sponsors supported the planning and implementation of communications programming in 15 countries. UNICEF and UNAIDS, for instance, developed a communications strategy to prevent mother-to-child transmission (MTCT), to be adopted under a pilot intervention programme. Also, the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), together with the UNAIDS secretariat, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP designed five country projects in the Caucasus region for the prevention of HIV/AIDS/STD and drug abuse, and for care.

69. The UNAIDS secretariat has identified, developed and disseminated "best practice" materials on communications programming. In addition to assisting countries with the implementation of the new communications framework, UNAIDS and co-sponsors have funded and provide support for other communications strategies, including peer education, in 15 countries. A comprehensive review of the use of peer education was conducted jointly by the secretariat and eight organizations — namely, the Jamaican Ministry of Health, UNICEF, USAID, the Population Council, Population Services International, the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), Family Health International, and Horizons.

70. The UNAIDS secretariat published *Prevention in the Context of New Therapies*, which emphasizes the role of communication in successful prevention, and the *Handbook for Radio Journalists*, as well as 20 case-studies on communication, including *Communication Handbook for HIV/AIDS Vaccine Trials*, in close cooperation with UNESCO. The dissemination of best practice documentation was very successful, especially in Asia and in Africa. Primarily the programmes address journalists, project coordinators and non-governmental organizations leaders, sensitizing them on issues of HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights. Emphasis has also been put on the creation of national documentation and collections modelled from the UNAIDS booklet on best practices.

71. UNAIDS mobilizes an extensive network of media professionals to make sure that HIV/AIDS retains visibility and remains high on the international political agenda. It specially highlights the dramatic socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS and publicizes the critical dimensions of the epidemic to a wide range of audiences through both mass media and traditional means of communication. Its outreach materials and activities help inform behavioural change and decision-making while providing specialist and non-specialist

information professionals with the most recent data available on global, regional and national levels.

VIII. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

72. In its support to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/172 and the recommendations of the Seventh Round Table on Communication for Development, the FAO Communication for Development Group directs attention to the following priority areas: identifying communication needs in support of agricultural and rural development; effectively using communication methodologies and technologies with rural people; developing appropriate communication policies, strategies, media approaches and messages; and developing and implementing communication training to build national capacity.

73. The key themes with which the Group deals are: (a) gender and communication for natural resource management; (b) HIV/AIDS and reproductive health; local, rural community radio; (c) traditional, folk and popular media; (d) interpersonal communication processes such as group dynamics and farmer-to-farmer exchanges; (e) new information and communication technologies (e.g., the Internet); (f) multimedia packages and campaigns; and (g) communication, curricula, training, studies and research. These themes are reflected in both the normative and field work of the Group. Normative work includes development of policies, strategies, methodologies, guidelines, best practices and information tools and materials, while field work is focused on project appraisal, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, technical backstopping and training, establishing partnerships and networks and providing communication technology advice.

74. Since its establishment in 1969, FAO's Communication for Development Group has been playing a pivotal role in improving agriculture and related sectors in the developing world (e.g., forestry, environment and nutrition). During these three decades the role of communication has shifted from a one-way, top-down transfer of messages by agricultural technicians to farmers to a social process designed to bring together both groups in a two-way sharing of information among communication equals — in short, participatory communication. In recognizing that rural people are at the heart of development, by seeking their views and involving them from the start, participatory communication has become what many consider to be the key link between farmers, extension programmes, and research for planning and implementing consensus-based development initiatives.

75. In the past few years, FAO has provided advice in 30 countries. Fifteen communication training workshops were conducted, and four prototype media packages were developed. Advisory services were provided for establishing better communication policies in countries such as Cape Verde, Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau. Studies on rural radio strategies, including equipment requirements and commercial feasibility, were undertaken in various African countries. Support was provided for the FAO High-level Consultation on Women and Information (Rome, October 1999) through the publication *Voices for Changes: Rural Women and Communication.* Support continued to the Southern African Development Community Centre for Communication for Development, primarily for financial sustainability plans and the Centre de services de production audiovisuelle in Mali, for which a training manual on video use was produced. A workshop was conducted in Malawi on using folk media for development. On a global basis, the FAO Communication for Development Group is an active member of the Global Knowledge Partnership, and is providing leadership to the appropriation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by local communities, including linking them to more conventional media such as rural radio.

76. Considerable attention of FAO has shifted to taking advantage of the new Internet-based information and communication technologies. Increasingly, national education, research and extension institutions in developing countries have email and Internet access, which can be effectively used by researchers to share the results of their experiences and allow extension workers to get access to information about crop improvements and technical innovations virtually from a distance. As in the case of other media, FAO applies a communication for development approach to its work with ICTs. This means that the design of communication strategies and approaches is based on an in-depth understanding of the information needs and communication patterns of a particular group of users.

77. An important task of FAO is capacity-building for intermediaries, including researchers, extension agents, educators and others who provide support services to rural areas, in the effective use of ICTs. This approach is reflected in an important regular programme activity entitled "Information and communication technologies in support of agricultural research, extension and education (REE) systems." It deals with ICT applications and the establishment of communication networks and linkages; content development/dissemination; preparation of training materials (e.g., for distance learning) and software tools for applying FAO information, adapted content and databases to national REE systems; and development of indicators to monitor and evaluate the impact of information dissemination and training with ICTs.

78. Also, FAO has developed the virtual extension/research communication network Vercon, which allows researchers and extension agents to develop, share, store and retrieve information. Another initiative is the FarmNet which links organized groups of farmers to service agencies. It builds on FAO experiences in Latin America where electronic networks provide farmers with essential information and data on crops, inputs, prices, markets, credit services, weather conditions etc.

79. Many rural people have access not only to national radio but also, increasingly, to community-based radio stations. In West Africa, FAO has proposed linking rural community radio stations to the Internet and to a telecentre being supported by ITU, UNESCO and other international organizations.

80. FAO has concluded that knowledge and information are essential if people are to respond successfully to the opportunities and challenges of social, economic and technological changes. But to be useful, knowledge and information must be communicated to people in ways that help them participate in and direct their own courses of change. In this regard, communication is an essential element of FAO work to improve agricultural productivity, food security and rural livelihoods in the developing world.

IX. World Bank

81. The World Bank is realigning its development efforts and forging new global partnerships to support the pressing analytical, policy reform, investment, and capacity-building requirements of the "knowledge revolution". At the global level, the World Bank will continue to promote partnerships with key stakeholders to mobilize resources and experience to address the challenges and opportunities of the knowledge economy, while, at the country level, will put knowledge at the centre of the development agenda and offer clients a broad array of knowledge products and services.

82. The World Bank considers country ownership of the knowledge revolution to be critical. Its Comprehensive Framework provides a collaborative mechanism for the key stakeholders in a country for mapping out the structural, social and human components of the revolution and for coordinating the support of the World Bank Group and other donors. Within the Framework, the World Bank Group will focus on four critical elements: (a) supporting an enabling environment; (b) building human capacity; (c) expanding basic connectivity and access, and investing in information technology applications; and (d) promoting the generation and sharing of global knowledge.

83. In the context of supporting an enabling environment, the World Bank Group is fostering policy, regulatory and network readiness for knowledge-sharing and information and communication technologies (ICTs). It supports critical, analytical and advisory work at the country and regional levels, including national knowledge assessments, ICT development strategies, e-commerce readiness assessments, and policy and regulatory reform. In addition, the World Bank Group promotes innovation on the use of ICTs for economic and social development, with special emphasis on the needs of the poor through the InfoDev Programme, a grant facility supported by a consortium of multilateral, governmental and private-sector donors.

84. In the area of human capacity-building, the World Bank Group focuses on promoting excellence in education, from basic to tertiary level, and on the new skills needed for ICTs for knowledge economy. The Global Development Learning Network links decision makers around the globe via telecommunications systems as participants in global learning activities. It enables people to learn in the home country environment, without costly travel or work disruptions. Currently 15 distance learning centres are operational to provide courses, seminars and special events and to exchange knowledge with colleagues around the world.

The World Links for Development Programme brings together students and teachers in secondary schools in developing countries with their counterparts in industrialized countries for collaborative learning programmes via email and the Internet. The Programme currently links approximately 100,000 teachers and students in 500 schools in 20 countries. In addition, the World Bank Group is active in promoting higher education in Africa through its "African Virtual University" project, a "university without walls", using ICTs to give the countries of sub-Saharan Africa direct access to global academic learning resources.

85. For expanding connectivity and access, the World Bank Group mobilizes resources to improve information infrastructure, working on ways to reduce the cost of connectivity, supporting community access programmes and developing local content and entrepreneurial information technology opportunities. It is worth noting that the investments provided by the Group are not only for supporting infrastructure development but also for putting technology at work to reduce poverty. For instance, multi-use telecentres link poor populations to governmental services and educational opportunities, providing access to the Internet and making available specialized resources to support rural development.

86. In the area of promoting knowledge generation and sharing, the World Bank Group supports knowledge networking, global research and communities of practice, focusing on creating and applying the knowledge necessary to stimulate and facilitate the transition to the knowledge economy as well as the knowledge necessary to reap its full economic, social and cultural benefits. Among the activities in line with this element are the Global Development Gateway, a new knowledge-sharing initiative, in collaboration with the private sector, international agencies, Governments and non-governmental organizations, envisioned as a Web portal on development issues; the Global Development Network, a system of collaboration among research institutes, policy makers and donors to encourage capacity-building, networking and knowledge creation, built on seven regional networks spanning the developing world and the OECD countries; the Knowledge Sharing Network, a programme to support more than 100 thematic communities of practice, which provide advisory services, statistical databases, good practice notes and other materials to connect people who have key development knowledge to those who need it; and the Development Forum, an electronic venue for dialogue and knowledge-sharing on key issues and challenges facing the development community, with particular emphasis on learning from those tackling those challenges in their daily lives.

Notes

[1] M. N. Jato, "The impact of multimedia family planning promotion on contraceptive behaviour of women in Tanzania", *International Family Planning Perspectives*, vol. 25, No. 2 (June 1999), pp. 60 ff.